

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00626 121053Z

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UNCLAS PRAGUE 0626

COMMERCE FOR BEWT/TPD - BLAIR THOMPSON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, CZ
SUBJ: 1976 BRNO FAIR: U.S. EXHIBIT THEME

REF: USDOC 03938

1. EMBASSY RESPECTFULLY BUT STRONGLY DISAGREES WITH SUGGESTION (REFTEL) THAT PRODUCT THEME FOR U.S. EXHIBIT AT 1976 BRNO ENGINEERING FAIR BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE ADP EQUIPMENT AND SMALL INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY. WITH COMMERCE'S CONCURRENCE, WE INFORMED FAIR AUTHORITIES IN MID-FEBRUARY THAT U.S. THEME WILL BE MATERIALS HANDLING EQUIPMENT (MHE). SUBSEQUENTLY, WE WERE GIVEN A TENTATIVE SPACE ALLOCATION (LARGER, INCIDENTALLY, THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS IN ACCORD WITH OUR REQUEST) ON BASIS OF MHE THEME. FAIR MANAGEMENT HAS FIRM POLICY OF DESIGNATING INDIVIDUAL PAVILIONS FOR SPECIFIC PRODUCT GROUPS AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RESIST STRONGLY ANY MIXED-THEME EXHIBIT IN SINGLE LOCATION AS THEY HAVE DONE IN YEARS PAST.

2. IN UNLIKELY EVENT SINGLE LOCATION ALLOWED, EMBASSY FEARS THAT MIXED-THEME EXHIBIT WOULD PRESENT CONFUSING, AMATEURISH APPEARANCE TO DETRIMENT OF ALL PRODUCTS EXHIBITED. ALSO, AS COMMERCE AWARE, WE HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED OUTDOOR SPACE WHICH IS SUITABLE FOR MHE BUT WOULD SEEM TO PRESENT PROBLEMS FOR EXHIBITION OF MORE DELICATE ADP AND SMALL INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT. IN MORE LIKELY EVENT FAIR AUTHORITIES REQUIRE US TO SHOW NON-MHE ITEMS IN SEPARATE PAVILION (ASSUMING THEY DO NOT VETO THEME
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00626 121053Z

CHANGE ALTOGETHER), WE WOULD FACE SERIOUS PERSONNEL AND LOGISTICS

PROBLEMS IN SUPPORTING TWO DISPARATE AND DISTINCT EXHIBITS WITH MOSTLY UNRELATED THEMES WITH SMALL STAFF INTENDED FOR ONE SINGLE-THEME EXHIBIT. BY DISSIPATING OUR EFFORTS TO THIS DEGREE, WE RUN GREAT RISK OF SUPPORTING BOTH PRODUCT LINES INADEQUATELY AND OF LOSING AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP SALES IN IMPORTANT MHE SECTOR.

3. EMBASSY APPRECIATES THAT FIRMS MENTIONED PARA 1 REFTEL ARE OUTSTANDING COMPANIES WHICH SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PENETRATE CZECHOSLOVAK MARKET. WE HAVE ALREADY WORKED WITH SOME OF THEM AND LOOK FORWARD TO ASSISTING ALL OF THEM IN FUTURE AS APPROPRIATE. HOWEVER, WE (INCLUDING BOTH DEPARTING E/COM CHIEF FARRAND AND HIS SUCCESSOR MONTGOMERY) BELIEVE THAT 1976 BRNO FAIR EXHIBIT SHOULD CONTINUE TO CONCENTRATE ON MHE, WHICH IS SURE TO BE SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT AREA UNDER NEW SIXTH FYP. (FARRAND HOPES TO DISCUSS THIS PERSONALLY WITH BEWT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON MARCH 23-26.)

4. EMBASSY ALSO PLEASED TO NOTE FOUR PRESTIGIOUS FIRMS (PARA 2 REFTEL) HAVE ALREADY INDICATED INTENT TO EXHIBIT MHE. WE HOPE THAT SMALLER, NEWER-TO-MARKET FIRMS WILL ALSO BE RECRUITED TO ROUND OUT EXHIBIT. IN THIS REGARD, WE WONDER IF COMMERCE HAS DISTRIBUTED FIVE LETTERS TO MHE TRADE ASSOCIATIONS WHICH EMBASSY PREPARED IN FEBRUARY FOR WASHINGTON DISSEMINATION TO ASSIST IN RECRUITMENT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE: (A) WHETHER, BASED ON RECONSIDERATION POINTS MADE ABOVE, WE CAN RETAIN MHE-ONLY PRODUCT THEME FOR U.S. EXHIBIT; AND (B) WHETHER LETTERS TO TRADE ASSOCIATIONS (PARA 4) HAVE BEEN SENT OUT. PERRY

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